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SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/C AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR MGAVIN AND CHUDSON
LONDON FOR POL -- PLORD
PARIS FOR POL -- GD'ELIA AND RKANEDA
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR AU

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PREL AU CD

SUBJECT: USG SHOULD PUSH BRITISH TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC
PRESENCE IN CHAD, AS THEY SAY THEY INTEND TO DO.

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This message is Sensitive but Unclassified. Not for Internet
dissemination.

¶11. (U) This is an action message: See para 11 below.

SUMMARY

¶12. (SBU) The British are considering establishing a small diplomatic presence in Chad, but Canada is planning no mission in the near term, according to visiting British and Canadian diplomats here last week. The British say they wanted direct, on-the-ground information-gathering capabilities, particularly on the Deby regime and any alternatives to it that might emerge. The Canadians say that their unwillingness to consider opening a mission at the present time is based on Chad's failure to make the sort of progress toward democratization and development that would render it "deserving" of even a small upgrade in diplomatic relations. We encouraged both the British and the Canadians to take greater interest in Chad and told the British that we looked forward to cooperating closely with any UK diplomat posted here. A British presence would mean that all of the UNSC Perm-5 would be resident in Chad, especially important now that MINURCAT is reinforced and as long as the humanitarian effort in the East and South continues. We also offered to consult on security with UK and Canadian diplomats resident or visiting.

¶13. (SBU) It is unfortunate that the Canadians do not intend to upgrade their relations with Chad. The British have been talking about posting a diplomat here for years, but have yet to move. It is in the U.S. interest for more international attention to be focused on Chad, especially in light of the standup of MINURCAT and prospects for greater humanitarian assistance in eastern and southern Chad, depending on developments in Darfur and CAR. The diplomatic presence in Ndjamena of additional like-minded countries works to that end. At a minimum, the USG should approach HMG to encourage the British to figure out logistics of a UK diplomatic presence and implement their stated intention of deploying here. END SUMMARY.

Brits Serious about Locating Here

¶4. (SBU) On March 17, DCM, DATT and poloff met with UK Second Secretary Giles Montagnon of the High Commission in Yaounde.

Montagnon said that HMG "had more or less decided" to post an officer to Chad, in part because the UK felt that its proxy arrangement with France -- whereby London makes itself available to cover French equities in former British colonies and Paris does the same for London in former French colonies -- was not yielding completely satisfactory results from the British point of view. According to Montagnon, HMG felt that the French were too willing to conclude that the Deby regime deserved full support as the only conceivable governing entity in Chad.

¶5. (SBU) Montagnon made clear that HMG had initially hoped to post an officer at the U.S. mission, as it had had this arrangement in some other African locations with great success. It was aware that we did not have room, and so was exploring other options. Britain very much wanted to have first-hand knowledge of events in Chad, said Montagnon, and to be less reliant on French perceptions. Montagnon asked whether U.S. felt isolated in Chad, "surrounded by Francophones."

¶6. (SBU) We made clear that we had an excellent relationship with the French, but added that the USG would welcome even a small and/or temporary UK diplomatic presence in Chad, and that we looked forward to cooperating closely with any UK diplomat posted here. We noted that a UK presence would mean that all of the UNSC Perm-5 would be resident in Chad, especially important now that MINURCAT was reinforced and as long as the humanitarian effort in the East and South continued. We repeated a long-standing offer to consult on security with UK officials, including with respect to emergency action planning. We reviewed the reasons that we

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were not in a position to provide work space in our facilities, repeating what we had told visiting UK diplomats in 2008. We told Montagnon that we enjoyed excellent working relationships not only with the French, but also with the Germans, EU, Russians, Chinese and small Africans nations that maintained a presence here, as well as with the UN.

Canadians are Negative on GOC

¶7. (SBU) On March 16, DCM and poloff meet with Canada's Lan Hoang, political officer at the High Commission in Yaounde, and Kirk Duguid, desk officer for Chad at the Canadian MFA. Duguid made clear that Ottawa was not for the time being contemplating either opening a mission locally or posting a single diplomat here, as the British were now considering. The Canadians said that Chad had not made the sort of progress toward democratization or development that would render it deserving of such a step on Canada's part. Duguid recalled that although the GOC had a year ago approached the Canadian government about opening a Chadian mission in Ottawa -- and the Canadians had assented -- there had been no further action from the Chadian side. He noted that Canada also was quite frustrated with Chadian "nonchalance" about Ottawa's demining support -- areas that had been demined with Canadian assistance were remined again immediately afterward.

¶8. (SBU) Duguid also noted that Canada had found the Chadian response to the hostage-taking of the two Canadian diplomats in Mali inadequate, particularly in that one of them, Louis Guay, was accredited to Chad. Neither Duguid nor Hoang could offer information on the current status of the hostages or of Canadian efforts to free them.

¶9. (SBU) After expressing our extreme concern and sympathy for our Canadian colleagues detained in Niger, we encouraged greater interest by Canada in Chad, citing MINURCAT, the humanitarian effort in the East and South, the prospects of

elections here, perhaps early next year, and development needs. We said that the USG would welcome more Canadian attention to Chad and that we would naturally continue to cooperate closely with any Canadian diplomats visiting here, as we had with Louis Guay. We told the Canadians as we had the British that we enjoyed excellent working relationships with our French, German, EU, Russian, Chinese and UN colleagues, as well as with those from African states with missions here.

COMMENT

¶10. It is unfortunate that the Canadians do not intend to upgrade their relations with Chad. The British have been talking about posting a diplomat here for years, but have yet to move. The French have told us that they would welcome a UK mission as a way to supply London with accurate information on developments in Chad. It is in the U.S. interest for more international attention to be focused on Chad, especially in light of the standup of MINURCAT and likelihood of greater humanitarian need in eastern and southern Chad, depending on developments in Darfur and CAR. The diplomatic presence here of like-minded countries would work to that end. At a minimum, the USG should approach HMG to encourage the British to figure out the logistics of a UK diplomatic presence and implement their stated intention to deploy.

ACTION REQUEST

¶11. (SBU) Request for Action: That the USG formally approach HMG to encourage the British to implement their stated intention to establish a diplomatic presence in Chad.

¶12. (U) Tripoli Minimize considered.
NIGRO